

Proposed Resource Management Plan and Final Environmental Impact Statement

Volume 1



May 2007

Eagle Lake Field Office





The Bureau of Land Management

Our Vision

To enhance the quality of life for all citizens through the balanced stewardship of America's public lands and resources.

Our Mission

To sustain the health, diversity, and productivity of the public lands for the use and enjoyment of present and future generations.

Our Values

To serve with honesty, integrity, accountability, respect, courage, and commitment to make a difference.

Our Priorities

To improve the health and productivity of the land to support the BLM multiple-use mission.

To cultivate community-based conservation, citizen-centered stewardship, and partnership through consultation, cooperation, and communication.

To respect, value, and support our employees, giving them resources and opportunities to succeed.

To pursue excellence in business practices, improve accountability to our stakeholders, and deliver better service to our customers.

BLM/CA/ES-2007-010 + 1790-1600



United States Department of the Interior



BUREAU OF LAND MANAGEMENT

Eagle Lake Field Office

2950 Riverside Drive

Susanville, CA 96130

(530) 257-0456

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www.ca.blm.gov/eaglelake

Dear Reader:

Enclosed for your review and comment is the Proposed Resource Management Plan (PRMP) and Final Environmental Impact Statement (FEIS) for the Bureau of Land Management's (BLM's) Eagle Lake Field Office. This document was prepared by BLM in concert with eight cooperating agencies, as well as from public comments received during the scoping phase and public comment period of this planning effort. The document contains both land use planning decisions and implementation decisions to provide planning structure to facilitate management of the Eagle Lake Field Office. The PRMP is open for a 30-day review and protest period beginning on the date the Environmental Protection Agency publishes the Notice of Availability of the FEIS in the *Federal Register*.

The geographic planning area includes BLM-managed public lands within the counties of Lassen, Plumas and Sierra, California, and Washoe, Nevada. The overall intent of this PRMP is to develop a comprehensive management strategy that will guide the management of public lands administered by the Eagle Lake Field Office into the future. This PRMP replaces ten former land use plans with a single, unified Eagle Lake Field Office PRMP.

This PRMP and FEIS has been developed in accordance with the National Environmental Policy Act of 1969 (NEPA), and the Federal Land Policy and Management Act of 1976. The PRMP is largely based on the Preferred Alternative in the Draft Resource Management Plan/Environmental Impact Statement (RMP/EIS), which was released on April 28, 2006. This document contains the proposed plan, summary of changes made between the Draft RMP/EIS and PRMP, predictable impacts of the proposed plan, summary of the written and verbal comments received during the public review period of the Draft RMP/EIS, and responses to the comments received. Public comments resulted in the addition of clarifying text, but did not significantly change proposed management decisions. A Reader's Guide is included to help you navigate through the chapters of this document, and is located directly after the Abstract.

Any person who participated in the planning process for this PRMP, and has an interest which is or may be adversely affected, may protest approval of this PRMP and land use planning decisions contained within it (see 43 Code of Federal Regulations (CFR) 1610.5-2) during this 30-day period. Only those persons or organizations who participated in the planning process leading to the PRMP may protest. The protesting party may raise only those issues submitted for the record during the planning process leading up to the publication of this PRMP. These issues may have been raised by the protesting party or others. New issues may not be brought into the record at the protest stage.

Protests must be filed with the BLM Director in writing. Regular mail protests should be sent to: Director (210), Attention – Brenda Williams, PO Box 66538, Washington DC 20035. Overnight mail should be sent to: Director (210), Attention – Brenda Williams, 1620 L Street, NW, Suite 1075, Washington DC 20036. Email and fax protests will not be accepted as valid protests unless the protesting party also provides the original letter by either regular or overnight mail postmarked by the close of the protest period. Under these conditions, BLM will consider the email or fax protest as an advance copy and it will receive full consideration. If you wish to provide BLM with such advance notification, please direct emails to Brenda_Hudgens-Williams@blm.gov and faxes to (202) 452-5112 (Attn: BLM Protest Coordinator).

IMPORTANT: In accordance with 43 CFR 1610.5-2, the protest must contain the information described in the following critical elements check list:

- The name, mailing address, and telephone number of the person filing the protest.
- The “interest” of the person filing the protest. (How will you be adversely affected by the approval or amendment of the resource management plan?)
- A statement of the part(s) of the PRMP, and the issue(s) being protested. (To the extent possible, this should reference specific pages, paragraphs, sections, tables, maps, or other items that are believed to be incorrect or incomplete.)
- A copy of all documents addressing the issue(s) that the protesting party submitted during the planning process OR a statement of the date they were discussed for the record.
- A concise statement explaining why the protestor believes the BLM State Director’s proposed decision is incorrect.

All of these elements are critical parts of your protest. Take care to document all relevant facts. As much as possible, reference or cite the planning documents, or available planning records (such as meeting minutes or summaries, correspondence).

The BLM Director will make every attempt to promptly render a decision on the protest. The decision will be in writing and will be sent to the protesting party by certified mail, return receipt requested. The decision of the BLM Director shall be the final decision of the Department of the Interior.

BLM’s practice is to make comments, including names and home addresses of respondents, available for public review. Before including your address, phone number, e-mail address, or other personal identifying information in your comment, be advised that your entire comment—including your personal identifying information—may be made publicly available at any time. While you can ask us in your comment to withhold from public review your personal identifying information, we cannot guarantee that we will be able to do so. All submissions from organizations and businesses, and from individuals identifying themselves as representatives or officials of organizations and businesses, will be available for public inspection in their entirety.

Unlike land use planning decisions, implementation decisions are not subject to protest under planning regulations but are subject to administrative remedies and review, primarily through appeals to the Office of Hearings and Appeals (Interior Board of Land Appeals). Implementation decisions generally constitute BLM’s final approval allowing on-the ground actions to proceed. Where implementation decisions are made as part of the land use planning process, they are still subject to the appeals process or other administrative review as prescribed by specific resource program regulations after BLM resolves the protests to land use planning decisions and makes a decision to adopt or amend the RMP.

These administrative remedies for final implementation decisions usually take the form of appeals to the Office of Hearings and Appeals, though for certain proposed or non-final implementation decisions, such as proposed grazing decisions, the regulations provide for an internal agency review (usually a protest to the Authorized Officer), which must be completed before the final implementation decision can be appealed to the Office of Hearing and Appeals. This type of protest to the Authorized Officer should not be confused with the protest of land use planning decisions to the BLM Director.

Upon resolution of any protests, an Approved Plan and Record of Decision (ROD) will be issued. The Approved Plan will be available to all parties through the “Planning” page of the BLM national website (<http://www.blm.gov>) or by mail upon request. The Approved RMP and ROD will include the appeals process for implementing decisions that may be appealed to the Office of Hearing and Appeals following its publication.

FOR FURTHER INFORMATION: For further information or to have your name added to the project mailing list, contact Jeff Fontana, Public Affairs Officer, Bureau of Land Management, 2950 Riverside Dr., Susanville, CA 96130, or email your request to necarmp@ca.blm.gov.

SUPPLEMENTARY INFORMATION: Copies of the PRMP/FEIS documents for the BLM Eagle Lake Field Office have been sent to affected federal, state, and local government agencies and to interested parties. Copies of the PRMP/FEIS documents are available for public inspection at the BLM Eagle Lake Field Office, 2950 Riverside Dr., Susanville, Calif. Interested persons may also review the PRMP/FEIS on the Internet at <http://www.blm.gov/ca/st/en/prog/planning.1.html>.

BLM would like to thank our cooperating agency partners that have worked so hard to help us complete this document. They have provided support and expertise to facilitate focusing the issues and developing alternatives to help resolve the many compelling resource concerns that face the Eagle Lake Field Office. We would like to particularly recognize Lassen and Washoe Counties, the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service, California Department of Fish and Game, Nevada Department of Wildlife, Nevada and California State Historic Preservation Offices, and Susanville Indian Rancheria as cooperating agencies on this document. Their experience and dedication has made this a better process and BLM looks forward to continuing to work with them to complete this planning effort. We also extend thanks to those individuals and organizations that have provided extensive information and many excellent ideas that have been considered during this process.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in blue ink, appearing to read 'Dayne Barron', with a stylized, flowing script.

Dayne Barron
Field Manager
Eagle Lake Field Office

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**U.S. DEPARTMENT OF THE INTERIOR
BUREAU OF LAND MANAGEMENT**



**PROPOSED
RESOURCE MANAGEMENT PLAN
AND
FINAL ENVIRONMENTAL IMPACT
STATEMENT
EAGLE LAKE FIELD OFFICE
SUSANVILLE, CALIFORNIA**

Prepared by the
Eagle Lake Field Office
May 2007

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Mike Pool", is positioned above a horizontal line.

**Mike Pool
State Director, California**

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**EAGLE LAKE FIELD OFFICE
PROPOSED RESOURCE MANAGEMENT PLAN/FINAL
ENVIRONMENTAL IMPACT STATEMENT**

[] Draft Environmental Impact Statement [X] Final Environmental Impact Statement

Department of Interior, Bureau of Land Management

Type of Action: [X] Administrative [] Legislative

Abstract:

This Proposed Resource Management Plan/ Final Environmental Impact Statement describes and analyzes the Preferred Alternative for managing the public lands administered by the Eagle Lake Field Office in northeast California and northwest Nevada. The Preferred Alternative provides management recommendations to guide the multiple use management of all resources. Proposed areas of critical environmental concern, suitable wild and scenic river segments, and cultural resource management areas are also recommended.

Protest:

BLM planning regulations (43 CFR 1610.5-2) state that any person who participated in the planning process and has an interest which is or may be adversely affected may protest the BLM's approval or amendment of an RMP. You must file a protest with 30 days of the date that the Environmental Protection Agency publishes its Notice of Availability in the Federal Register.

For further information contact:

Planning Coordinator
Bureau of Land Management
Eagle Lake Field Office
2950 Riverside Drive
Susanville, California 96130
(530) 257-0456
FAX (530) 257-4831

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Readers' Guide

Introduction

The Eagle Lake Proposed Resource Management Plan (PRMP)/Final Environmental Impact Statement (FEIS) is divided into 5 chapters, and includes maps (of the planning area and the Preferred Alternative), an Executive Summary, Appendices, a Glossary and Acronyms List, and a Bibliography.

Executive Summary

The Executive Summary addresses the entire document and highlights the key issues brought forth in the Preferred Alternative.

Chapter 1

Chapter 1 identifies the purpose and need for the plan, defines the planning area, and explains public participation in the planning process. This chapter identifies the planning criteria used as guidelines influencing all aspects of the process. These guidelines are based on law, regulation, and policy. Also included in this chapter is a description of the involvement of state, local, and federal governments and tribal agencies. The issues developed through public participation and the planning processes are described herein.

Chapter 2

Chapter 2 incorporates the Preferred Alternative from the Draft RMP into the PRMP/FEIS. The PRMP includes a detailed description of the management goals, objectives, allocations and allowable uses, and guidelines for the Preferred Alternative. The actions in this PRMP/FEIS are designed to provide general management guidance in most cases. Specific projects for a given area or resource will be detailed in future activity plans or site-specific proposals developed as part of interdisciplinary project planning or other means. These plans and processes address more precisely how a particular area or resource is to be managed and additional National Environmental Policy Act analysis and documentation would be conducted as needed.

An *Alternatives Summary Table* is included in this chapter. This table provides the reader a general summary of the key management actions for each of five alternatives, as developed for the Draft RMP.

An *Impacts Summary Table* is also included at the end of Chapter 2. This table provides the reader a comparison summary of the main adverse and beneficial impacts that would result from implementing each of five alternatives, as developed for the Draft RMP.

Maps are also supplied to assist the reader in comprehending proposed management actions as described in Chapter 2.

Chapter 3

Chapter 3 (Affected Environment) provides an overview of the planning area and describes the existing situation for each of the resource programs. It describes both the biological and physical components that may be affected by the alternatives. Other components of the environment that will not be affected by the proposed actions such as climate are also described. Current management direction is briefly summarized for each program.

Chapter 4

Chapter 4 (Environmental Consequences) analyzes the beneficial and adverse effects of the Preferred Alternative. There are assumptions at the beginning of each specific resource program to help guide the reader through the thought process. At the end of the analysis of each resource subject, a discussion of the cumulative effects is provided.

Chapter 5

Chapter 5 summarizes key events in the consultation and coordination process prior to and during preparation of the PRMP/FEIS. It also lists those agencies, organizations, and individuals who were contacted or provided input into the planning process. Also listed are the technical specialists and editors who prepared this plan.

Appendices

The appendices include supplemental material referenced in the PRMP/ FEIS.

BLM Response to Public Comments

Copies of the public comment letters received can be viewed from the CD located in the back pocket of Volume 2. The BLM response to each comment (or group of comments) is located in *Appendix O. Public Comment Responses*. Each comment is summarized as to content by resource subject, and the corresponding BLM response is given. Any changes which have been made to the document resulting from a public comment are also referenced in the table.

Changes between the Draft and Final

The Draft Eagle Lake Resource Management Plan and Environmental Impact Statement (DEIS) was published in April 2006. The public had 90 days, until July 27, 2006, to submit comments on the DEIS. All comments received were seriously considered, and many were used to assist in making changes or clarifications to the PRMP. Changes made to the DEIS include the following:

- Changes to the DEIS Preferred Alternative.
- Clarifications, corrections, supplemental analysis, and additional information added to various chapters of the PRMP/FEIS.
- One new map was created and is included with this document. These changes are listed in Chapter 1 under changes to the Preferred Alternative.

A complete list of substantial changes made to the PRMP from the Draft RMP is included in Chapter 1.

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

Introduction

The Bureau of Land Management (BLM) has prepared this Proposed Resource Management Plan (PRMP) and Final Environmental Impact Statement (FEIS) to provide direction for managing public lands within the Eagle Lake Field Office planning area and to analyze the environmental effects resulting from implementing the Preferred Alternative.

The Eagle Lake Field Office includes approximately 1,022,767 acres of BLM-managed surface acres in northeastern California and northwest Nevada. The geographic area includes BLM-administered lands within the counties of Lassen, Plumas, Sierra, California, and Washoe, Nevada. BLM's mission is to sustain the health, diversity, and productivity of the public lands it manages for the use and enjoyment of present and future generations. The Eagle Lake PRMP was developed in coordination with the Alturas and Surprise Field Office PRMPs to provide a consistent framework for managing public lands and resource uses in northeast California and northwest Nevada.

The PRMP was prepared using BLM's planning regulations and guidance issued under the authority of the Federal Land Policy and Management Act (FLPMA) of 1976. An FEIS is also included in this document to meet the requirements of the National Environmental Policy Act of 1969 (NEPA), Council on Environmental Quality regulations for implementing NEPA (40 Code of Federal Regulations 1500-1508), and requirements of BLM's NEPA Handbook, H-1790-1.

Purpose and Need

The purpose of the Eagle Lake PRMP is to provide guidance in the management of the lands and resources administered by the Eagle Lake Field Office of BLM that will address major resource issues identified during scoping, and through internal and cooperating agency meetings. The Eagle Lake PRMP is meant to be comprehensive in nature, providing guidance for management of all uses and resources administered by BLM in the planning area.

Current management direction for the Eagle Lake Field Office is contained in ten land use plans or amendments that were developed from 1973-2002. New information, changed circumstances, and resource conditions since these plans were prepared require the revision of these existing plans into a single updated PRMP.

Population growth from the metropolitan areas of Reno, Nevada, and Redding, California, has increased the demand for use of public lands to support community needs and to provide recreation for a variety of uses. In addition to traditional consumptive uses, public interest has expanded in uses that emphasize aesthetic values such as open space and low-impact recreational opportunities. Changes in the type of recreation uses and the demand for diversified recreational opportunities can result in conflicts between uses and resource concerns that the old land use plans were not designed to address. Concerns include how these uses affect ecosystem health; local communities; and state, regional, and tribal interests.

Vegetation communities continue to be threatened by both the encroachment of western juniper into sagebrush-grasslands and from the invasion of annual exotic grasses and noxious weeds. The number of plant and animal species recognized by California and Nevada as special status species has increased. In addition, the decline of sage-grouse populations in the western United States has triggered BLM national, state, and local strategies with new guidance to address habitat requirements of the species.

New protocol agreements between BLM and State Historic Preservation Offices guide the protection, inventory, and conservation of cultural resources as they relate to other resources and land uses. Emphasis is being placed on finding and managing traditional cultural properties in accord with local tribes.

Planning and Public Comment Process

BLM officially initiated the planning process for the Draft Eagle Lake Resource Management Plan (RMP) with publication of a Notice of Intent in the *Federal Register* on July 22, 2003 (Volume 68, Number 140). Issues related to resource management in the Eagle Lake planning area were assembled during the scoping process consisting of public scoping meetings, field tours, socioeconomic workshops, and interactions with federal, state, tribal, and county collaborators.

BLM hosted six public scoping meetings in August and September 2003. A total of 205 people attended these meetings. Four meetings were held within the planning area. Other meetings were held in Redding, California, and Reno, Nevada, to ensure that BLM heard the concerns of user groups residing outside the planning area. BLM also conducted a scoping meeting in the field in August 2003. A community workshop was conducted to discuss economics and social values in December 2003.

The scoping process generated 15 key issues to be addressed in the RMP. These issues, listed below and summarized in Chapter 1, were used to develop alternatives and are addressed in other sections of the resource management plan (e.g., effects on local economies).

1. How should upland ecosystems be managed?
2. How will forestry issues be managed, and how will forest resources be utilized?
3. How will water resources be managed and utilized?
4. How will visual resources be managed and preserved?
5. How should riparian areas and wetlands be managed?
6. How will wildland fire and prescribed fire be managed and utilized?
7. How should vehicular access and travel be managed on public lands?
8. How should the public lands be managed to sustain the traditional practices and traditional cultural properties of Native American cultures?
9. How should the public lands be managed to meet the needs of local communities?
10. How will grazing and rangelands be managed?
11. What lands are available for energy and mineral development?
12. What lands will be identified for retention, exchange, disposal, and acquisition?
13. How will recreation opportunities be managed?
14. How will fish, wildlife, and special status species be managed?
15. How should special resource values and special management areas be designated and managed?

The Draft Eagle Lake RMP and Draft Environmental Impact Statement (DEIS) was published in April 2006. The public had 90 days, until July 27, 2006, to submit comments on the DEIS. During this period, BLM held seven public comment meetings.

The public comment period generated approximately 7,253 submissions of 1 form letter, 3 submissions of another form letter, and 49 additional unique comment letters from individuals and groups. The approximate number of comments that BLM analyzed and responded to was 550. These are summarized in Appendix O of this document.

All comments received were seriously considered, and many were used to assist in making changes or clarifications to the Proposed RMP. Changes made to the DEIS include the following:

- Changes to the Draft EIS Preferred Alternative.
- Clarifications, corrections, supplemental analysis, and additional information added to various chapters of the FEIS/PRMP.
- Creation of one new map that is included with this document.

A complete list of substantial changes made to PRMP from the Draft RMP is included in Chapter 1.

Collaboration

BLM approaches planning with community-based collaboration, in which interested groups and people—often with varied or opposing interests—work together to devise solutions with broad public support for managing BLM-administered lands. Cooperating local, state, tribal, and federal agencies have been part of the planning team for the PRMP to the fullest extent possible. During plan implementation, BLM will continue partnerships with these public and local, state, and tribal governments and agencies to select high priority projects and to resolve emerging issues.

The Council on Environmental Quality defines a cooperating agency as any agency that has jurisdiction by law or special expertise for proposals covered by NEPA (40 CFR 1501.6). Any federal, state, or local government jurisdiction with such qualifications may become a cooperating agency by agreement with the lead agency. The following are formal cooperating agencies for this PRMP:

- Lassen County, California;
- Washoe County, Nevada;
- U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service;
- California Department of Fish and Game;
- Nevada Department of Wildlife;
- Nevada and California State Historic Preservation Offices; and
- Susanville Indian Rancheria.

The Northeast California Resource Advisory Council (RAC) contributed issues and reviewed goals, objectives, and management alternatives. Other groups that participated in the planning process include California Department of Forestry and Lassen National Forest.

Management Alternatives

BLM developed management alternatives for the Eagle Lake Field Office Draft RMP using input and comments from public scoping meetings, written comments, as well as from staffs of BLM and other cooperating agency partners. NEPA regulations and BLM resource management planning regulations require the formulation of a reasonable range of alternatives that seek to address identified planning issues and management concerns. Each alternative must be evaluated to ensure that it would be consistent with resource goals and objectives, and current laws, regulations, and policy.

Alternatives are developed to establish a framework to evaluate the potential impacts on the planning area that might occur as a result of implemented management decisions. The five management alternatives developed for the Eagle Lake RMP are detailed in this section, including:

No Action Alternative (required by NEPA): Retains current management through guidance and direction from current policies and existing management plans.

Alternative 1. Resource / Economic Development: Emphasizes commodity production from BLM resources in accordance with local economies and land use plans from local communities and counties.

Alternative 2. Ecosystem Restoration or Protection: Maximizes efforts to maintain, restore, or improve components of the ecosystem using natural ecosystem processes.

Alternative 3. Traditional or Historical Uses: Emphasizes traditional community uses of resources and/or emphasizes historical uses and values.

Preferred Alternative: The Preferred Alternative was “crafted” from all of the other alternatives and combines management actions from all four of the above listed alternatives. This alternative has been designed and selected to best meet the purpose and need of the plan as described in Chapter 1 and to meet desired future conditions, goals, and objectives of individual and combined resources and resource uses.

Each alternative has a somewhat different concept and emphasis on how natural resources and resource uses would be managed. The Draft Eagle Lake RMP provided a detailed description of alternative management actions for 25 resource subjects. The desired future condition, goals, objectives, and management actions for the Preferred Alternative are discussed in detail in Chapter 2. The highlights of management actions under the Preferred Alternative for each resource subject are listed below.

Key Management Actions under the Preferred Alternative

Air Quality

- Manage prescribed fires and wildland fire use (0–4,500 acres/year) in a manner to reduce impacts to air quality.

Cultural and Paleontological Resources

- Designate and manage 17 important cultural sites as Cultural Resource Management Areas.
- Designate Buffalo Creek Canyons and Lower Smoke Creek as archeological areas of critical environmental concern.

Energy & Minerals

- Manage 391,339 acres as ‘Open’ to mineral leasing under standard terms and conditions.
- Manage 1,014,361 acres as ‘Open’ to locatable minerals.
- Manage 634,002 acres as ‘Open’ to saleable minerals.
- Manage 553,011 acres as ‘Open’ to renewable energy. Manage WSAs (380,359 acres) as renewable energy exclusion zones, according to the Wilderness IMP. Designate seven areas of critical environmental concern (89,397 acres) as renewable energy avoidance areas.

Fire Management

- The NorCal Fire Management Plan identifies aggressive, full suppression as the appropriate management response (AMR) under conditions of severe fire intensity, especially in the wildland urban interface. However, exceptions may be made where resource objectives could safely be achieved.
- Under conditions of low fire intensity, a less aggressive AMR, such as containment/confinement, would be implemented in previously identified areas likely to benefit from wildland fire use.
- Manage wildland fires using the Appropriate Management Response (AMR):
 - Full suppression AMR 282,304 acres
 - Full range of AMR suppression options 730,124 acres
 - Wildland Fire Use 10,339 acres

Forestry Resources

- Manage 11,020 acres as commercial forest using a mix of silvicultural methods.
- Rehabilitate 773 forested acres burned in the Willow and Devil fires.
- Manage 1,332 acres along the Biz Johnson Trail for wildfire defense by employing commercial and pre-commercial thinning.
- Harvest trees and biomass from 1,100 forested acres per year.
- Implement fuels reduction in the Tunnison Wilderness Study Area (1,734 acres).
- Manage commercial forests in Upper Murrer Meadows for preservation of wildlife habitat and late seral stages in addition to commercial harvest.

Fuels Management

- Implement fuels treatments through prescribed fire and mechanical, chemical, and biological methods to reduce build-up of hazardous fuels, provide fuel breaks, and create defensible space in communities at risk.
 - Prescribed fire 0 - 4,500 acres per year
 - Mechanical treatment 500 - 3,500 acres per year
 - Biological treatment 50 - 1,500 acres per year
 - Chemical treatment 50 - 500 acres per year

Lands and Realty

- Prioritize acquisition of lands with important resource values, to improve public access, and lands within or adjacent to special designations.
- Prioritize disposal of lands with no significant resource values that are difficult to manage.
- Corridor width would be a minimum of 2000 feet unless adjacent to exclusion areas.

Rights-of-Way

- Wilderness study areas (380,359 acres) would be designated as rights-of-way exclusion zones. All proposals must meet non-impairment criteria which prohibit permanent facilities unless they are grandfathered, have valid existing rights, or provide access to private inholdings.
- Avoid rights-of-way within areas of critical environmental concern (89,397 acres).
- Establish new communications sites on Antelope, Shaffer, and Grasshopper Mountains, as needed.

- Designate and prioritize the Alturas Transmission Line Route (Western Regional Corridor Study) and the Tuscarora Pipeline Empire Lateral as rights-of-way corridors.

Livestock Grazing

- Maintain livestock grazing within 54 allotments. Continue to implement rest or deferred grazing within 60%-80% of total allotments annually.
- Authorize 52,250 Animal Unit Months annually.
- Maintain 987,779 acres open to livestock grazing. Continue to implement rest or deferred grazing within 80%-90% of total grazing lands during some part of the grazing season.
- Maintain and construct 2,000- 2,500 acres of exclosures to protect sensitive resources.
- Manage and rehabilitate existing seedings for livestock forage on 3,000-4,000 acres and prioritize new seedings on a case by case basis.
- Implement strategies to progress towards meeting land health standards.
- Livestock salting will not be allowed within ¼ mile of springs, meadows, streams, archaeological sites, and aspen areas. Location of salting stations would be determined by the BLM in consultation with livestock permittees.

Recreation and Visitor Services

- Manage 848,620 acres of land outside of special recreation management areas as extensive recreation management areas.
- Manage three existing special recreation management areas totaling 65,570 acres under the provisions of their current management plans.
- Designate two new special recreation management areas totaling 108,557 acres.
- Provide accessible camping opportunities for disabled visitors at all developed campgrounds in compliance with federal law.
- Limit camping to 14 consecutive days and 28 days annually.
- Prohibit camping within 200 feet of creeks, rivers, lakes, and reservoirs unless posted otherwise. Enforce additional buffers near guzzlers and near the following five Lassen County wells: Butte, Shaffer, Tableland, Table Mountain, and Belfast.
- Designate seven additional scenic byways to promote recreational sightseeing.
- Apply restrictions to energy and mineral development to protect recreation experiences.
- Work with local governments and agencies to acquire the Modoc Line Railroad corridor for recreational use.
- Develop a management plan for the Honey Lake Valley Rim trail and provide public access to the public shoreline.
- Develop hang glider launch areas in hills north of Wendel and at other sites subject to user demand.
- Apply Recreation Opportunity Spectrum (ROS) classes to all lands to provide a diversity of recreational experiences:
 - 'Backcountry' 675,335 acres
 - 'Roaded Natural' 109,497 acres
 - 'Primitive' 237,953 acres

Soils

- Implement practices to promote recovery of 113,236 acres of upland soils not meeting Standards for Rangeland Health.
- Ensure all management activities result in “no net loss” of soil mass or productivity within the management area.
- Developments and uses would be limited to soils which are considered unproductive or most suitable for construction purposes.
- Minimize management activities within perennial and intermittent drainages where watershed function would be adversely affected.
- Implement soil protection practices that emphasize mitigation, natural recovery, and bio-engineering. Use of additional restoration practices would be employed where natural recovery efforts are not sufficient.
- Employ bio-engineering projects to improve soil condition and achieve ‘Proper Functioning Condition’.
- Apply sediment intrusion buffer zones ≥ 50 feet around sensitive resources on a case-by-case basis.
- Implement mitigation actions to offset soil and productivity losses within the same sixth-level watershed area (conceptually 10,000 – 40,000 acres).

Special Designations:***Areas of Critical Environmental Concern (ACECs)***

- Designate seven new ACECs totaling 89,397 acres:

○ Eagle Lake Basin	34,320 acres
○ Susan River	2,495 acres
○ Pines Dunes Research Natural Area	2,887 acres
○ Willow Creek	2,130 acres
○ Lower Smoke Creek	894 acres
○ Buffalo Creek Canyons	36,515 acres
○ North Dry Valley	10,156 acres
- All ACECs are rights-of-way avoidance areas. This means that any applications for new rights-of-way or utility corridors would undergo a site-specific NEPA review, and would only be granted if BLM concurs 1) the only feasible location is within the ACEC, and 2) no relevant and important resources would be adversely affected.
- Livestock grazing would be managed according to permit stipulations, allotment management plans, and ACEC management plans.
- Noxious weeds would be aggressively controlled in all ACECs.

Special Designations***Historic Trails***

- Develop a management plan for 38 miles of the Nobles Emigrant Trail to include inventory, interpretation, and protection.
- Initiate inventory and interpretation of six additional historic trails.
- Secure public title or access to abandoned railroad grades.
- Designate Buffalo Creek Canyons and Lower Smoke Creek as scenic and historic ACECs.

Special Designations***Wild & Scenic Rivers (WSR)***

- Recommend portions of Upper Smoke Creek as suitable for designation as a Wild and Scenic River, with a 'wild' classification.

Special Designations***Wilderness Study Areas (WSA)***

- Prioritize acquisition of land parcels within all WSAs on a willing-seller basis.
- Establish ROS 'Primitive' areas within all WSAs.
- Close 45 miles of selected routes within ROS core 'Primitive' areas.
- Construct 68 miles of non-motorized/non-mechanized routes within selected WSAs.

Travel Management

- Manage 1,656 miles of GPS-inventoried routes as the designated route network in the field office area.
- Routes closed or not designated through this RMP or subsequent amendments would be closed and rehabilitated.
- Implement designated route network modification criteria for changes in designation, new route construction, route realignment, route closures, rehabilitation, or obliteration.
- Permanently 'Close' 59 miles of routes, and implement seasonal closures at Cleghorn Access Road, Tablelands, and Horse Lake Areas.
- Assign off-highway vehicle use area designations:
 - 'Open' 419 acres
 - 'Limited to designated routes' 760,837 acres
 - 'Closed' 261,511 acres
- Construct up to 15 miles of new motorized routes.
- Construct 264 miles of non-motorized routes in selected special management areas.
- Close the Bizz Johnson Trail to snowmobile travel except for emergency and administrative use. Allow snowmobile crossing of the trail at Devil's Corral area west of Highway 36.
- In addition, approximately 45 miles of routes within the ROS 'Primitive' areas would be 'Closed' to snowmobiles.
- Manage boating on Biscar Reservoir and the Susan River for human-powered watercraft only.
- Manage boating on Round Corral and Buckhorn Reservoirs for human-powered watercraft and low speed trolling motors.

Vegetation

- Maintain 300,000 acres of vegetation alliances, associations, and ecological sites rated as 'Healthy'. Work toward restoring 335,000 acres rated as 'Healthy/Lacking Key Attributes' and 146,000 to 197,000 acres rated as 'At Risk'.
- Use mechanical treatments, prescribed fire, integrated weed management, and reseeding of native species aimed at restoring 21,000 to 28,000 acres of vegetation alliances rated as 'Unhealthy'.
- Vegetation communities encroached by invasive juniper would be treated using prescribed fire, mechanical, chemical, and manual treatments. Manage to conserve juniper on sites composed of woodland soils (21,000 acres).

- Manage livestock grazing in quaking aspen, California black oak, and buffalo berry sites primarily by controlling the timing and season of use by livestock. Construct exclosures at selected sites.
- Restore Wyoming and mountain big sagebrush ecosystems containing sage-grouse habitat by treating no more than 20% of the habitat acres during a 30-year period, to protect important habitat areas.
- Use locally gathered native seed when re-seeding, where possible.

Noxious Weeds & Invasive Species

- Implement Integrated Weed Management (IWM) procedures on all BLM lands. Review all project proposals to determine necessary IWM actions and coordinate treatment with local agencies.
- Conduct inventory of noxious weeds.
- Monitor treatment sites to determine effectiveness and effects on non-target species.
- Increase public understanding of noxious weeds and their effects through education.

Riparian/Wetland Associations

- Achieve measurable progress toward 'Proper Functioning Condition' or 'Desired Future Condition' on 35 miles of perennial and intermittent streams and 33 acres of riparian/wetland areas.
- Continue riparian photo studies to document changes in vigor and function.
- Protect riparian areas from grazing damage through riparian management which includes constructing exclosures, fencing, developing alternative water sources, and modifying grazing season of use.

Special Status Plants

- Manage all special status species habitats and populations so that BLM actions do not contribute to the need to federally list these species as threatened or endangered.
- Reduce or eliminate impacts to special status species and their habitat when conducting ground disturbing activities.
- Acquire lands from willing sellers that support unprotected populations of special status plants.
- Provide additional protection measures to 'special interest' species to prevent them from becoming listed as special status plants.

Visual Resources

- Manage all wilderness study areas as VRM Class I.
- Assign VRM Inventory Class designations to all BLM-administered lands, and manage lands according to these class requirements, to protect scenic quality:
 - VRM Class I 0 acres (WSAs not listed to avoid duplication of acres; underlying VRM designations for WSAs are included in Class totals below)
 - VRM Class II 507,843 acres
 - VRM Class III 442,028 acres
 - VRM Class IV 72,896 acres

Water Resources

- Implement restorative measures to improve water quality and progress toward meeting state standards. Emphasize natural recovery processes, grazing exclosures, planting of woody riparian vegetation and construction of in-stream structures.
- Uses will not be restricted as long as they do not impede the restoration of state water quality standards or riparian health objectives.
- Prioritize restoration efforts on Smoke, Shoals, Cottonwood, and Red Rock Creeks.
- Maintain existing water sources and manage to promote wildlife habitat, improve distribution of livestock and wild horses, and provide for recreational uses.
- Prioritize development of new water sources to extend seasonal water availability for wildlife, and to benefit desired ecosystems.
- Withdraw state-appropriated water rights on waters that are not “waters of the state”.
- Assert in-stream flow rights in Nevada and riparian rights in California on all perennial and important intermittent streams.
- Projects that involve inter-basin transfer of water would be coordinated with local and regional governments.

Wild Horses and Burros

- Manage wild horses and burros on one established herd management area (HMA) and wild horses on two established HMAs on 828,596 acres covering 81% of Eagle Lake RMP area.
- Conduct a regular aerial population census – at least every three years – in order to monitor habitat conditions and population levels.
- Prioritize selection of animals returned to BLM-administered lands after gathers based on historical traits.
- Maintain populations within established appropriate management levels (AMLs) by conducting regular gathers.
- Consider fertility control research in some or all HMAs.
- Develop facilities for public viewing, education, and wild horse adoptions.

Wildlife and Fisheries

Federally Listed Species

Carson Wandering Skipper

- Conduct surveys to determine habitat suitability and cooperate as a partner in recovery plans.

Bald Eagle

- Conduct population surveys and implement seasonal protection measures.
- Develop GIS information system for nesting, roosting, and foraging areas.
- Manage suitable forest habitat to retain potential nest trees.

Lahontan Cutthroat Trout

- Cooperate with California Department of Fish and Game on local planting of hatchery stock and related habitat issues.

Yellow-Billed Cuckoo

- Contribute to survey efforts and develop action plan if populations are found on BLM administered lands.

Wildlife and Fisheries

State and BLM Listed Sensitive Species

- Cooperate with partners to obtain information on species occurrence, abundance, and distribution. Develop a GIS database to document and track information.
- Manage suitable habitat to retain forest characteristics for California spotted owls.
- Implement seasonal protection measures and buffer zones, as appropriate, for permitted activities.

Wildlife and Fisheries

Ungulates

- Control cheatgrass, invasive juniper, and noxious weeds to improve habitat conditions.
- Use plantings, seedings, willow thinning, and other vegetation treatments to maintain and improve terrestrial and aquatic habitats.
- Develop GIS system to manage information for habitat use areas, HMAs, and hunting zones.
- If Rocky Mountain elk populations become established in the field office area, coordinate with state wildlife agencies and other partners, including livestock operators, to develop and implement management plans.
- Voluntary changes or conversions of existing domestic sheep grazing permits from domestic sheep to cattle grazing permits would provide ELFO the opportunity to coordinate with state wildlife agencies and other cooperators in developing a reintroduction plan for California bighorn sheep prior to reintroduction efforts.

Wildlife and Fisheries

Sagebrush Ecosystems and Sagebrush Obligate Species

- Implement actions from the 2006 *Conservation Strategy for Sage-Grouse and Sagebrush Ecosystems within the Buffalo-Skedaddle Population Management Unit*.
- Reduce western juniper and noxious weeds in sagebrush communities. Implement seasonal protection measures and buffer zones; and timber and fuels treatments to maintain and improve habitat.
- Avoid practices that permanently convert sagebrush habitat to non-native grassland or agricultural land.

Wildlife and Fisheries

Other Native Wildlife Species

- Manage migratory birds in accordance with the *Migratory Bird Treaty Act* and Executive Order 13186, *Responsibilities of Federal Agencies to Protect Migratory Birds*.
- Follow BLM policy, guidelines, current conservation plans, memorandums of understanding and best management practices in the management of species and habitats.
- Coordinate reintroductions, augmentations, and translocations of native species with state wildlife agencies.
- Build brush piles for upland game birds where cover is insufficient.
- Develop opportunities for wildlife interpretive programs.

Wildlife and Fisheries***Native and Non-Native Fish and Aquatic Species***

- Improve streams and springs not in 'PFC', and maintain native fish-bearing streams in proper water quality and riparian function.
- Restore and rehabilitate streams by maintaining or improving minimum pool depths, increasing clean spawning gravels, and stabilizing stream banks.
- Coordinate with state agencies when implementing management actions, including the planting of fish in suitable waters.
- Coordinate with local county fish and game commissions and sportsmen's groups to determine management priorities and enhancement opportunities.

Wildlife and Fisheries***Non-Native Terrestrial Species***

- Manage non-native species per BLM Manual 1745 and in cooperation with state plans and other applicable conservation plans.

Environmental Consequences

The potential environmental consequences (or impacts) of the five alternatives were analyzed for each natural resource, resource use, and social and economic conditions in the Draft RMP. Detailed descriptions of the direct and indirect impacts of resource management under the Preferred Alternative are provided in Chapter 4, along with a discussion of the possible cumulative impacts that could result from actions taken in this PRMP. A comparative summary of these impacts (for all alternatives) is provided in the Impacts Summary Table in Chapter 2.

The Preferred Alternative would enhance the ability of BLM to achieve the purpose and need of this document, as outlined in Chapter 1, as well as meet desired future conditions, goals, and objectives for specific resources, as outlined in Chapter 2. Alternatives 1, 3, and No Action lack the degree of management emphasis required to restore degraded sagebrush steppe communities and habitats, in relation to the encroachment of juniper.

The Preferred Alternative would result in overall minor to moderate adverse impacts to resources, and these impacts would continue to be mitigated. Management actions under the Preferred Alternative would result in moderate to major beneficial impacts to native vegetation communities from restoration efforts and the use of prescribed fire to remove invasive juniper. Improvements to riparian areas, water bodies, and other special habitats would improve soil and water resources and wildlife habitat. The designation of seven areas of critical environmental concern, one wild and scenic river, and an increased emphasis on cultural resource protection and management would have beneficial impacts to these important and unique resources.

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GRAZ-1N	Livestock Grazing Allotments by Planning Unit - North
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HT-1	Historical Trails
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WSR-1	Wild & Scenic River Designations
TRAVEL-2	Off-Highway Vehicle Area and Route Designations
TRAVEL-3	Non-Motorized Trails
VEG-3	Noxious Weed Infestation Sites
VEG-4	Special Status Plants
VRM-1	Visual Resource Management Classes
WATER-1	Water Quality Status
WATER-2	Riparian Functioning Condition
WATER-3	Annual Precipitation 1961 - 1990
WHB-1	Wild Horse and Burro Herd Management Areas
WL-1	Carson Wandering Skipper Potential Habitat
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Proposed Resource Management Plan and Final Environmental Impact Statement

Volume 2



Eagle Lake Field Office

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